

LEARNING
AND
KNOWLEDGE

Recommended to the
SCHOLARS
OF
Brentwood School
In ESSEX;

IN A
SERMON
PREACHED

At their First FEAST, *June 29. 1682.*

By *William Payne*, M. A. Rector of *St. Mary White-
chappel*, and Fellow of the ROYAL SOCIETY.

Published at the earnest desire of the
STEWARDS.

L O N D O N,
Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the *Bishop's
Head* in *St. Paul's Church-yard.* 1682.

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AND
KNOWLEDGE

SCHOOL

School

In a 2 1/2

SERMON

PREACHED

At the Anniversary of the Royal Society
on the 17th of January 1723

By the Rev. Mr. M. A. B. of St. Paul's Church
in London

Printed for J. B. in the Strand

To his Honoured MASTER,
Mr. Barnard, of Brentwood School
in Essex.

S I R,

AS you were pleased to command me this School Exercise, which like other Truants you know I was forced to make in haste, so since you are resolved to shew it the World I must desire you to let it know, that you, and the Stewards and those others who heard it, had much better thoughts of it than I my self had, or can yet have the comfort of; and that it goes to the Press not out of any wanton inclination it has that way, but meerly to please its Friends, tho it should happen'd to be ruin'd by it.

I thought it inconsistent with my duty to deny you the first fruits however green or raw of your own School, and of what you have so great a Title to in the whole; And for your sake I know all my School-fellows will receive it with kindness and candour. 'Twas for their use I designed it, and calculated it wholly for the Meridian of Brentwood, and if any others should chance to read it, and not consider it was Preach'd

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chiefly to young Schollars, they may very much injure me, if they will not give me leave to entertain those with something more freedom than I would Mourners at a Funeral, and no wise and good man can be concern'd to see folly and ir-religion expos'd and made ridiculous.

There is one thing I must beg even my School-fellows pardon in, and that is, that I treated them neither with Greek or Latin, but besides that they are grown dishes much out of Fashion at such entertainments, I knew they had enough of those at Brentwood, and the School I thought was a more proper place for them than the Pulpit; and that they are better afterwards digested into sence than brought up whole again; as Epictetus, his Sheep brought their wool and their milk to their Keepers, but not the hay and fodder they had given them. I have no more to say for my self, or my Sermon, but that both the Preaching and Publishing it were designed to be some way or other serviceable to Religion and Learning, and to express my grateful resentments of the kindness I have ever received from you, and to assure you and the World, that I am,

SIR,

Your most obliged and humble Servant,

W. Payne.

P R O V. 1. 7. latter part

Fools despise Wisdom and Instruction.

THose who have best consider'd and understood the World, the Ancient as well as the New Philosophers, have always made one system of it, and represented it not only as an aggregate and heap of Beings, but as one Compacted and Beautiful, and well composed Body, of which we were all the lesser Parts and Members : And tho they seem to have too strait and narrow thoughts of God and his Creation, who think he made the whole Universe, the Sun and Moon and whole host of Heaven only for the benefit of this lower *Earth*, this little point in respect of the vast *expansum* that is above, yet its more than probable they were all designed, and all the numerous creatures in them to be
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subservient and useful to the whole and to one another, in due proportion and fitness they are mutually to correspond and serve each other, and keep such exact harmony as the great *Apollonius* has tuned and ordered them for. Mankind 'tis certain were made for mutual help, advantage, and assistance to each other, & do therefore naturally fall into Societies and combinations that may better promote their own private and the public good; they find it necessary to enter into several Companies and Corporations, that they may carry on all good offices, and beneficial commerce with one another, & thereby increase the common Stock of happiness in which their own is included. However the *Hobbiſts* have slandered humane nature, and drawn a false picture of it from themselves, and their own ill tempers, and made it a timorous and yet a ravenous Monster with long fangs and talons, sharp teeth and claws ready to devour and prey upon its own kind, yet that in its self is very tame and gentle and good natured, inclined to love and sociableness, and there is nothing more agreeable to it, nor more delightful

full than mutual friendship and kindness; to this Nature has tied us by the first and the fastest ligaments even those in our Mothers Womb, those *vasa umbilicalia*, by which we are united to our Parents as well as nourish'd by them; and as we cannot be born out of society, and in such a wild state of nature as they would suppose us, so these ties of Birth and Blood do most strongly bind and fasten us together as far as they reach. And the next cement of friendship to this of nature, if not a stronger, is that of an acquaintance, and society in our first tender years, the having our first sprightly Spirits mixt as it were and fermented together. The kind impressions that were then made upon us when we were soft and fluid, harden afterwards and become firm as in Adamant; like characters cut upon the young and tender bark, they continue and grow greater as the tree increases. Friendship which is thus early planted in the same mold, rootes the deeper, and grows the stronger, and is ready ever after to clasp and embrace its old associates with the greatest confidence and satisfaction. 'Tis this Gentle-

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men and School-fellows, has brought us here together, and first to the Temple and the House of God, the School of all Vertue and Religion; that as the Ancients used to confirm friendship with Sacrifices, and owed Learning and Letters to be the gift and invention of their Gods, and therefore their Priests even from the *Egyptians*, were the great preservers of them, so for both those accounts we should begin with Religion: And as that is the best guaranty of all friendship and society, without which they are all but so many Treacherous Associations against Heaven, so we cannot surely but have a just sence of it when we consider how Providence in a few years has brought us at least some of us, through unseen ways to our present circumstances and condition; when we see the great advantages we have had by the Blessing of God, from our first early and happy Education, and the great reason we have to give Heaven our most hearty Thanks, that we were not of the number of *Solomons Fools, who despise Wisdom and Instruction.*

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None of those are here, they are without ploding, to get mony, they are minding things as they think, of more necessary importance, and lading themselves with thick clay, they are for no wisdom but with an inheritance, nor for any instruction but how to Thrive or grow Rich, they care for nothing further in Grammar than that of *meum* and *tuum*, nor are for any Latin but a *noverint Universi*, and above all Printing they admire King *Pergamus* his way, the writing upon Parchment, and they keep no other Books but such by them, with all the various titles and editions of Leases, Morgages, and Purchases; and those they are well read in, and understand without a Dictionary. And thus with full Pockets and empty Heads, with Gold in their Bags, perhaps about their Necks, and Lead in their Skulls, these laden Asses despise and spurn at Learning, because it has not always such Rich trappings as themselves.

But the best sort of Tools, they say, to get Mony are made of Lead, or at least a great mixture of that Mettal; and the finer Ores are nothing so serviceable to that purpose.

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And there are a sort of the dullest and most scraping Animals who live always in earth, and have but very little or no eyes.

But there are more Mercurial Fools, who are abroad Travelling to learn *French* before they can well read or spell *English*, their carefull Mothers thought Latin not so good a Language to make a leg with, and that Greek might be apt to make the Child stammer, so she sends them early abroad to learn the more important arts of dressing and wearing Feathers, of making Court and Address; and so their Learning, ever after lyes in combing their Wiggs, and putting on their Cravats, and they prove eternall Students upon their own Looking-glasses; they shrug and throw their Heads modishly, and tread much more exactly than they think; but all Learning they contemn, because 'tis bald and weares ruff; and cannot fancy the Muses because they are ill drest; with great judgment they prefer a *French* face before *Kingit* and *Homer*, and see more wit in *Scaramouchies* face than in all the Antients put together, and despise all the Greek and the Roman Histories in respect of the

the amours of the *French* Court. One of these men would fain be an Atheist but he has not skill to read *Lucretius*, and so is fain to be a small retailer at Atheism and Prophaneness, as he picks it up in little parcells from a Play or a Lampoon; and that we may be well assured that he despises nothing like Learning unless it be *Religion*, he thinks nothing in the World so contemptible as a Parson and a School-master, and next to himself he thinks nothing so accomplish'd as a Dancing-master or a Player, and who of all these is the worthier man we must leave it as a dispute among themselves. But lest showing you the Picture of these Fooles should make us too merry, let us seriously consider the reall good and excellency that accrues from that Wisdom and Instruction that they despise, and I shall endeavour to represent that to you upon these four accounts.

1. As it improves a mans own mind.
2. As it fits him to do good in the World.
3. As it entertains a mans Time and his Life with the greatest pleasure.
4. As it is usefull to the concerns of *Religion*.

1. As it improves a mans own mind. It is a very probable opinion of the Wisest men and Philosophers, that humane Souls are all equal, that Nature like a just and impartial Mother, as she has made us all out of the same clay, the same Flesh and Bloud, so she has equally divided Reason and Understanding amongst us as a common Portion, and given us intellectuall powers and faculties of the same size and bigness, and that which makes them so much differ at so great a rate, that the souls of some men seem to be at as high a pitch above the lowest of others, as they do above the best sort of Brutes, is besides the various temperament of the Body and texture of the Brain from their Education. 'Tis this which cultivates and improves the Soil into Riches and Fruitfulness, that would all without it be barren and wilderness; and carves & works the same wood into a piece fit to adorn the Temple of God, or the Palaces of Princes, that would else have bin but an heavy block, and useles log: As Naturalists tell us those active and spirituous parts that are in most Bodies are lock'd up and imprison'd until

til they are freed and unloosed by heat and such like exaltations; so that reason which is in human minds sunk and oppressed with heavy matter is to be excited & sublimed by a course of study and learned preparations; and this it is sometimes in so high a degree, that the strongest Spirits of wit and reason have bin drawn off from the lees as it were of mankind and the lowest parts; and some who gave no manner of promises at first, yet by means of a kindly Education have blown and ripen'd tho perhaps more slowly, yet to considerable improvements; so that one would think that these after they became Profelytes to Learning had as the *Jews* imagin'd of the Profelytes to their *Religion*, a New soul put into them.

Reason is the greatest perfection of humane Nature, but like a Diamond it is naturally rough until Education polish and well set it, and without that we see how it sinks into brutish sottishness in the untaught and uncivilized part of mankind.

There can be nothing so perfective of our beings, so much worth our utmost care and desires as a wise and well improved mind, a
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defect of reason and understanding is the greatest blemish of humane nature beyond that of the worst deformity ; and their is nothing so low and contemptible in the opinion of every one as to be a Fool and a Block-head ; he that can endure if not boast himself to be Vitious and Debaucht cannot bear that, and tho our age has endeavored as much as it can to make vice creditable, and lessen the vertubus and morall improvements of the mind, yet it has kept so much of humanity as to give the greatest Honour, even above every thing else, to wit and good understanding.

And what is that, but a filling the mind with true conceptions and lively idæas, the storing and enriching it with the best knowledg of things, and the most curious Images and Pictures of them, the enlarging and opening it to the Noblest truths, and letting it see and behold all things that God and Nature has set round about it.

These are some crawling Souls that look only downward, and mind nothing but what is just under their feet, Creatures that are concern'd no further than their own sty and trough,

troughr, and have no larger compass for their thoughts than the kennell they sleep in; and how shrunk and little do their minds grow, how do they shrivel and dry up to nothing; I will not say how ill was reason bestow'd upon them, but how ill do they use that greatest gift of God to men, and hide that noble Talent in a Dunghill. How is their soul only like Salt to keep their Body sweet, and preserve the hog from stinking; how would it tempt one to think that was even material, and like the *anima brutorum*.

It has been the conceit of many that the soul is but a *rasa tabula*, a kind of fair unwritten Paper till it has received impressions from without, and in these men it continues a perfect blank, or at least 'tis onely a little scroled with some odd marks, and here and there blotted and blur'd over; 'Tis onely Wisdom and Instruction that fill it with fair and excellent Characters, that writ things upon it in their natural shape and order, that draw them to the Life, and in their true colours and postures, and describe upon it the greatest remarques and concerns that are or have been in the World

World : And by these means make it instead of a dark and hollow Cave, fill'd only with damps & ugly spectres, a pleasant and delightful Store-house of the richest truth and the choicest knowledg.

2. As it fits a man to do good i'the World, and I think it deserves not the name of Wisdom that does not some way or other do that ; if a mans Learning be only about toyes and trifles, however odd and pretty he may contrive them, and be not an instrument that will serve to any usefull purposes for mankind ; if instead of making a little City great with *Themistocles*, it teach him only to play on the fiddle ; if it be only a critical knowing words without things, a making Elymologies and Cognations with those that are no way related, a contriving nice terms and distinctions to loose plain sence, a studying Judiciary Schemes, and fancifull Cabalas, and mysterious *Zoars*, 'tis then onely a more Learned sort of folly and ignorance ; he that Studies hard only for those things, is much like him that should Travel over a great part of the World to make a collection of the tayls of Monkeys, or the fins of flying Fishes. Man-kind

kind is like to be more benefited by the labors of a Porter, or a Ploughman, than by such trifling and useles pedantry : But those things which are most beneficial to the World, which really conduce to the comfort, and welfare, and happiness of Mankind, are best carried on by the help of the truest Learning, and best Knowledge; Physick that preserves our health, and restores it, is founded in natural Knowledge and Philosophy; Navigation that brings us all the Conveniences and Riches of the World in Astronomy and Geometry, the knowledge of Law and Government upon that of Ancient Codes and Histories, as well as modern; and Divinity it self upon almost all others, and especially the knowledge of true Moralls, of Tongues, and Ecclesiastical Antiquity; without which, instead of Physicians and Merchants, we should have only Mountebanks and Pedlars; and instead of Lawyers and Divines, only Pettifoggers and Divinity Quacks.

And in all things whatsoever the more dextrous and ready and nimble any part is, the more subservient will it be to the uses of the

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whole Body ; and Knowledge in general is the same thing to Practice that Sight is to Walking, it shews us the realities of things, and dispells the shadows and false conceptions of them, and lets us see how to handle and take right hold of them, and manage them by the truest measures of Prudence ; it sets us in the right and nearest way to such an end, and lets us see the difficulties before us, and the best means to escape them ; it regulates us in our practice by right rules and methods, and manages and orders all circumstances to suite best with the design it proposes ; & tho some men who are carried into the shady and solitary parts of Knowledge and Speculation, are by disuse rendered unfit for an active Life, yet where Learning and Knowledge, and an active Mind happen to meet, 'tis they that do the great things, and much greater in such a conjunction than they could do asunder ; and tho without that we have some instances of usefull men, and great exploits, yet 'tis but as we have of great Cures done by Empirics, 'tis good Skill joyn'd with Experience that is much more valuable.

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The most useful persons to Mankind have bin the men of Wisdom and Learning, witness not only the Inventers of Arts & Letters, the *Egyptian Thoth* or *Hermes*, the *Grecian Orpheus* and *Palamedes*, and other celebrated names, but the best Law-givers that have made whole Kingdoms happy by their Wise instructions, *Licurgus*, and *Solon*, and *Numa*; and above all *Moses*, brought up in all the Learning of the *Egyptians*; and to the honour of Learning, and those who have been the Teachers of it, it is observ'd that where Princes have had the fortune of good Tutors and Instructors, they have made themselves and their Kingdoms both great; Such as *Charles* the Great who had *Alcuinus* for his Master, a Disciple of *Bede*; *Honorius* and *Arcadius* who had *Arsenius*, *Otho* the Emperor who had *Gilbertus Floriacensis*, and *Charles* the Fifth who had *Adrian* the Sixth; and so sensible were those great men of the benefits they had by their Education, that in gratitude to their Masters, some procured Statues for them; as *Mark Antony* did for *Junius Rusticus*, and *Gratian* the Emperor made his Tutor *Ausonius* Consul,

Consul, and *Alexander* own'd himself as much obliged to *Aristotle* as to *Philip* his Father.

The happiness of *Rome* under *Nero's* minority is justly ascribed to *Seneca*, and that of *Gordianus* to his Tutor *Misrobis*; and this observation is true, both nearer us at home, and as far back as *Joseph* and *Pharaoh*, and the foundation of the *Italian* Common-wealths by *Zaleucus* and *Charondas*, who were the Disciples of *Pythagoras*, justifying that saying of *Plato*, that those Common-wealth's were happy where either Philosophers govern'd, or their Governors Philosophized: And 'tis certain those Kingdoms have been always the most famous even for Arms too, who have been so for Learning and Sciences, and when *Rome* decayed in the latter of these, it did in the former; and was over-run by the barbarous and Northern Nations, when it was itself growing barbarous.

2. I shall consider the excellency of Learning and Knowledge, as it entertains a mans life, and his time with the greatest pleasure: Thus Knowledge like Light is not only useful and necessary to the doing business, and trans-

transacting our affairs, but 'tis infinitely pleasant and delightful in it self, and were it only so, it were no way to be despised; as no man would be willing to be blind, tho he had not much to do.

Our minds are busy and active things, apt to be wearied and tired with the same objects, and can quickly exhaust all the sweetness and vertue out of them, and must be still in quest of fresh entertainment for themselves; or else like cloy'd and surfeited Stomachs they will turn all they have into *nausea* and loathing; and 'tis Knowledge alone that can feed them with new dainties & repasts, and furnish them with infinite variety of sound & manly pleasures, that shall never grow flat and languid, nor satiate and overcome us.

'Tis certain there is no appetite more strong, nor the satisfaction of it more pleasant than that of Knowledge, the thirst of it increases with drinking, and yet every sip and taste is extremely delicious, and has transported even Wise men beyond Wine, or Raptures; with great ardor and *impetus* does our minds court and embrace it, and find infinite pleasure in every enjoy-

enjoyment of it, and all its conceptions are brought forth, if not with ease, yet with joy and ecstasie ; so that whole hecatombs have been offered at the birth of a new notion, or piece of knowledge ; more was *Archimedes* transported with his Problem, and *Supma*, than the Priests, or others, at their most jovial *Bacchanals* : And not only in some sudden rapturous effects does it outdoe all the lower pleasures of Sensuality, but it entertains the mind with a calm and even, a lasting and abiding pleasure, or rather a constant variety of pleasures. What can more divert and please our thoughts than to look back sometimes upon the Ages that are past, to acquaint oneself with the transactions and affairs that have busied the world, to view the distant Scenes, and the thronged Theater of Ancient times, and consider all the Parts of the great Fable and *Drama* that Mankind has been ever acting ; and not to be always Children, as *Tully* calls it, and know only what is present and in their days ; or at furthest, have no other History than at the beginning of an Almanack : I will not mention the pleasure of
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looking forwards to Ages to come, tho the immoderate desire of that shows how pleasant even the forbidden Fruits of the Tree of Knowledge are, but without the help either of Stars or Familiars, a Wise man may make such conjectures of Futurity as are useful to him, and the wise observing what is past, is the best Scheme can be erected to know what is to come.

How delightful is it safely to travel over all the Earth, the great Cities and the vast Mountains, the mighty Deep and the pleasant Plains and Rivers, and take a prospect of the whole and large Field of Nature, and all the variety upon it; to converse now and then with the wisest Nations, and with the barbarous, and see their Customs and Manners, and whatever is worthy a curious enquiry. How pleasant is it to Survey the whole beautiful and regular frame of the Universe, to look into the secret treasures of the Earth, to see its fruitfull Bowels dissected and laid open before us, all the riches of Nature ranack'd in its Mines and Minerals, and to have a view of all its choice Pieces and excellent Draughts, and understand the fine and
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curious way by which it works them ; to enter into its Laboratory, and see the course of Chymistry it goes through in every Animals body, and the wonderful Mechanism of every Part and Member ; to look into our selves, and see the delicate Clock-work that moves our Hands and our Feet, and the fine lay'd Pipes and Water-works that convey the *Serum*, and the Blood and Spirits from their proper Conduits : Nay to ascend into the very Heavens, and with a quick and nimble thought pass through all the Spheres and *Vortices*, and see how they are made, and in what Lines they move ; what Order and Harmony they keep, and how the great Geometer has made all things in Weight and Measure, with the best counsel and contrivance : What can be equal to all these pleasures of Wonder and Admiration, Learning and Knowledge ? This is one of the noblest Entertainments that God designed man to enjoy in this World, to contemplate the Works of the Creation, and 'tis one of those Pleasures which God himself enjoy'd, when he survey'd his own Creation, and saw that it was Good ; and agreeable to the ideas of his own wise mind ;

mind ; there are none but must be sensible of this, unless a gross Ignorance spoil their *Palate*, and like the *Chaonian* Clown, they care for no other Meat or Entertainment but *Acorns*, and what they have been used to in there own *Cottage*, and think nothing relishes with any true gusto, but rank Garlick and Onions.

4. I shall consider the Good and Excellency of Learning as it is useful to the concerns of *Religion* , and then it becomes the truest Wisdom, when it has any tendency, any way to serve *Religion* , without which we are Fools in the main, and shall be found so at last, and at the foot of the account.

There are some indeed, that think Learning an Enemy to *Religion* , and that 'tis better bred up under a devout Ignorance, And then *Heathenism*, would have been a better Mother of Devotion then *Christianity* ; but whatever thoughts these Men have of Learning which we shall see anon , I am afraid they have no great kindness for *Religion* , 'tis to be feared they have no good designs upon it who thus keep it in the dark, 'tis there they Prostitute

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and corrupt it, and make it yield to their base, lewd, and villanous designs, and indeed such a thing as they have made of it, the only way to make men devoutly adore it, is not to understand it; the Light would betray their false wares, and discover the base Coyn they would put off, however Infallibility have stampt and counterfeited it: but these men and their friends are often crying out against too many Schools, and too much Learning, as the means to make men pert and conceited, eternal disputers in Religion, setters up of sects and parties, and so think themselves wiser than their Teachers, or their Governours; If they do so, I am sure 'tis the fault of their Ignorance, and not of their Learning; all those mischiefs proceed not from having, but wanting a good understanding; and I am afraid the lessening *Schools*, and suppressing Learning, is not the best way to remedy that; but as one of the wisest Enemies to *Christianity*, *Julian*, thought this the most likely way utterly to destroy it. And if Princes must use this way to keep their People quiet and orderly, then to prevent mutinies and quarelling, and seditious breaking the Peace; they may as well blindfold them

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or put out their eyes, by which they would be forced to live quietly, but things are come to a very hard pass if men must become a sort of stupid brutes, that they may be the better manag'd, and in order to bear the bit and bridle, must not exercise and improve their Reason: 'Tis certain if they had not Eyes, nor Hands, nor Legs, they would not be so well fitted to do mischief, but no more would they likewise to do good, and therefore 'tis not advisable to destroy a manifest good thing, for an accidental inconvenience that may sometimes happen from it, not with the *Thracians* to cut down all the Vines in their Countrey to avoid Drunkenness, nor with the *Turkish* and the *Popish* Policy, to destroy Learning and Knowledge, to make men more Governable and Religious. But because if Learning were any way prejudicial to Religion, all its other uses and excellencies, would signifie very little, and it would be improper for me to recommend it to you in this place, I shall particularly shew its manifest usefulness to that, as it destroys the greatest Enemies to it, which are these: *Atheism*, *Prophaness*, *Poperie* and *Fanaticism*.

1. *Atheism*, and yet that has been laid to the Charge of being great Scholars, but very unjustly, tho' we should reckon *Epicurus*, *Vaninus*, and *Hobbs*, among the *Atheists*, 'tis certain, they were none of the great Clerks of their Age, and 'twas chiefly their singularity and boldness to confront the natural sense, and universal opinion of all wise men, that made them considerable or taken notice of, they might have past else unobserv'd, and unregarded in the common crowd: and we very well know, that most of their Followers in our Age can scarce understand, and often are not able to read them, unless for the common benefit of *Atheism*, they are translated into their Mothers Tongue; and by those helps he that resolves to be lew'd and debauched, thinks it best to set up for a wit and an *Atheist*, and to laugh at the Contradiction of spiritual Substances, and immaterial beings, and he can conceive nothing but matter and motion, and will not let the Priests inpose any thing upon him, that he can't understand; but had this man but a little more Learning and Sense, he would presently find, that 'tis as easie to understand spirit as matter, and that there are nigh as many difficulties in
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the most ordinary *Phænomena* of Nature, as in the Mysteries of Religion, and that he can as little give a full Account of the most obvious things, the colour of grass, or his own hair, the natural paints of Flowers, the Species and Seeds of Fruits, his own Figure, Shape, and the like ; as how Spirits think, and move , and converse without a Body ; and that a Man may as much lose himself in those things the further he goes on, and must at last stop at the Will of the First Cause, as in the other ; and 'tis as easie to conceive an infinite God, as infinite Matter or Space, and how he is present in all places and yet has no parts, as how Matter is made either of divisible or indivisible, how the Center is equal to the Circumference, and how two Lines may approach nearer one another, and yet never touch, tho' drawn in *infinitum* : so much Learning as will make a good Philosopher will spoil an *Atheist* , and the right knowledge of Nature, will bring him to the knowledge of a God , when he sees in every part of it the footsteps not of Chance, but of wise Counsel ; and by considering that, he will find the nature of good and evil to be as certain and immutable, as
that.

that of a Circle or triangle: and if he go on to read Books, he will find that all the wise Men that ever were in the world, have been against *Atheism*, that the belief of a God has been the belief of all ages and nations, of the wisest and the freest thinkers, as well as the unlearned and ignorant, and that there have been few such Monsters of Men as have denied it.

2. Prophanes and debauchery, which you have observ'd I am sure the smallest proficients in Learning, and the most idle truants from their Book, to be most apt to fall into; Alas 'tis much more easy to discourse loosely and idely, then coherently and to the purpose, to be fluent in fashionable oaths then in any true eloquence, to talk Ribauldry and Prophanes, than sence and reason; and therefore you shall often find, that he who could hardly be brought to construe *Cata* at School, shall afterwards out of spite and revenge, despise and laugh at all Vertue and Morality; and he who could never read the Greek *Testament*, shall become a notable Jester up the Bible in *English*; and the raw and simple Fop, that has not the Learning of the meanest *Curate*, shall be confidently drolling upon God and Religion, and exercising

exercising his wit and railery, such as it is, upon all the Learned Men in black; Now had this witty dunce ever had the skill or the patience, to Study and know what Learning was, he would have had more esteem for it where e're it is, and have known how to put it to a better use. And tho' I shall not reckon either Greek or Latin, no nor Hebrew, neither *Aristotle*, or *Cartes*, or *Averroes*, among the Instruments of Conversion, or the ordinary means of Grace; yet I am confident that the applying a Mans mind to study, and employing it in the business of Learning and Knowledge, will both take him off and divert him from most of that lewdness and debauchery, that idle and unemploy'd and active minds fall into; and will help to fix the quick-silver, and settle the extravagancies they are inclined to; and turn that loose, and wild, and frothy humour, which is the usual vehicle of Prophaneness and effect of Idleness, into solid and consistent Sense and Learning; and that is the best prepared seed-plot and nursery for true *Religion*.

3. *Popery*, which sprang up in the darkeſt, and moſt barbarous Ages of Chriſtianity; in the Night when men were aſleep, the Enemy ſow'd thoſe

those tares in the Church that have since overrun the true Corn; when Learning degenerated into fabulous Legends, and Monkish Stories, when it was suspected to be a good Latinist, and almost Heresy to understand Greek; then they foisted in those false and spurious Readings into the Antients, and put out feigned Books under false Names, and took the advantage of an ignorant and undiscerning Age, as dishonest persons do of the Night, or the dusky twilight; and when it was become an Heresy to believe the *Antipodes*, it was a good time to make *Purgatory*, or *Transubstantiation*, an Article of Faith; and even now in those Countrys which are the truest vassals to the *Popedom*, the decay of Learning is very manifest, so that there is little of Greek in *Italy*, and scarce any at all in *Spain*, the *School-Men* and the *Canonists*, making up almost all the Learning amongst them, and 'tis not to be doubted that the restoring Learning by *Erasmus*, and others about his time, made great way for the Reformation, and disposed the world very much to receive it; and that Learning, and free Philosophy, and examination of things which has been the temper of the world ever since, has
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not a little threatened and affrighted them, and they sufficiently shew'd their dislike of it in the usage of *Galileo*: it being their whole design to keep Mens minds in Ignorance and Captivity, in Darknes and Slavery, and by no means to allow that liberty of thinking, and reasoning, of enquiring, examining and judging, which the Reformation doth.

4. Learning as 'tis an Enemy to *Poper*y so 'tis no friend to *Faniticism*, every one knows, that grows out of an unskilful Head that has great heat in it but without light; *Enthusiasm* is a kind of Spiritual Frenzy and Religious madness, that proceeds from a great Zeal that puts the Blood and Spirits into an Extraordinary Ferment and Commotion, and has but very little knowledg to slake and cool, and govern them; and next to the Applications of *Physick* and letting Blood, there is nothing will so certainly cure it as sober Learning and Instruction; this clears the mind of all those fumes that disturb it, and dispells those dark Images and Representations of things that are before it, all those *Phantasms* and *Chimeras* like Sprites and *Hobgoblins* vanish at the approach of Light and Day, and hant and disturb

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People

People only in the dark. The Enthusiasts and pretenders to Inspirations, have been always the great decryers of Humane Learning under the name of vain Philosophy, as being sensible that nothing does more tend to abate the excesses and allay the violences of their *Enthusiastick* Fervors, then this doth, and then I am sure nothing can be more serviceable to *Religion* than that which prevents one of the worst defeases it is subject to, A Spiritual *Hectick* and Consumption.

I shall crave leave to add but one thing more to show not only the serviceableness but the absolute necessity of Learning to *Religion*, and that is this, *Religion* that was taught by God, and deliver'd from Heaven is contain'd and transmitted down to us in such Books and Records as do necessarily require Learning to understand them, not only the skill in Languages as a Key to unlock and decypher the meaning of those Holy Books, and the peculiar *Idiotisms* and *Proprieties* of those Languages, without which we have only the sound and not the sence of them, but the knowledg of Times and of Places, and the Customs and Manners of those People to whom many things in Holy *Scripture* do immediately relate, and their true meaning cannot be understood

understood without them ; one of the great Causes of mis-interpreting, and mistaking the sense of Holy Scripture, is the taking it as a Book writ in our Times, and not many Ages ago, and the thinking nothing necessary to understand and manage the Bible, but a vulgar Translation, and a large Concordance ; when some of the most considerable things in it, not only the Prophecies of the *Messiah* and the time of his coming, but the nature of the two Sacraments nay that of our Saviour's Sacrifice and satisfaction, cannot well be understood without knowing the *Jewish* and the Heathen Notion about Sacrifices, and yet 'tis that upon which the whole *Gospel æconomy* does mightily depend. Indeed the great and necessary lines of Morality are so plain not only there, but even on the hearts of all Men that they need not much Comment ; but the understanding all the parts of those Holy Books, (part of which is the most antient Writing we know of) and all the several Revelations and particular matters contained in them, is a Work of the greatest and the most valuable Learning.

But I shall add no more but my earnest advice and wishes that we who have had the advantage
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of Learning and good Education, would take care to employ it some way or other to the purposes of *Religion*, and bring some honor and advantage to that by it.

And as 'tis the most ill Manners and ill Breeding not to treat *Religion*, the most sacred thing in the World with decency and respect, so 'tis a sign of little Wit and less Learning not to believe it, and then 'tis the grearest folly i the World not to practice it, unless it be that of Buffooning and Burlesquing it, and therefore let us take care to leave all those rude and unmannerly, as well as mad and wicked things, to those Atheistical and Prophane, *Popish* and Fanatical Fools, who are those chiefly who despise Wisdom and Instruction.

F I N I S.

